

1861-1862

ERICSSON, ALRIKSON, JOHN (1803-1889), a Swedish-American engineer and inventor, introduced the successful use of screw propellers on commercial and naval vessels. He designed and built the *Monitor* for the United States Navy in 1861 and 1862. The *Monitor* was a propeller-driven warship with two heavy guns mounted in a revolving armored turret. Her successful duel with the *Virginia*, formerly the *Merrimack*, at Hampton Roads, Va., in 1862, dramatized the coming of the ironclad warship.

Ericsson was born in Värmland province, Sweden. He showed great mechanical aptitude at an early age. In 1816 and 1817, he served as a draftsman for the engineers building the Göta Canal in Sweden. He entered the Swedish Army at 17, and became a land surveyor.

Ericsson went to London in 1826, and quickly developed a reputation as a bold, original, and able draftsman and engineer. He took an active interest in the use of compressed air for power, blowers for forced draft in boilers, the surface condenser, the hot-air engine, the screw propeller, and the railway locomotive.

Ericsson came to the United States in 1839. He designed and built propeller-driven canal boats, warships, and merchant steamers. He was outstanding for the utility of his designs and is credited with almost 2,000 inventions.

JOHN H. KEMBLE

See also PROPELLER; MONITOR AND MERRIMACK.